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## THE PEACE QUESTION.

SOME people assert so loudly that there always will be war upon earth, that one might almost suspect them of a dislike to peace. On the other hand, some of the friends of peace are so sanguine about the realisation of their favourite views, as almost to create a diversion in favour of war. Perhaps just views lie between. It may be quite true that mankind in general are as yet far from that moral state which would put an end to war; but we may nevertheless say, let there be as little war as possible, and we may encourage all rational plans for reducing the likelihood of its recurrence. There is surely a prudent and sober course for a lover of peace, which should give offence to none, but simply advance the cause he advocates.

When practical people scoff at the proposed courts of arbitration, they forget that there is a system nearly equivalent in operation at this moment. When a dispute arises between two states, a third, meaning well to both, usually gives her friendly services in bringing about an amicable settlement. Great Britain and some other states are at this time busy in patching up various disputes tending to war throughout the continent, not always perhaps with the greatest wisdom or the highest success, but yet acting towards the very purpose contemplated in a court of arbitration for nations. There is nothing, therefore, so very wild in this idea.

It may nevertheless be frankly admitted—we at least have no difficulty in making the admission—that cases will occur where no kind of mediation will serve, and where a court professing the power of arbitrating would only add one party more to those involved in the strife. To adjust a quarrel, there must be a strong disposition to peace on at least one side, and no resolute desire of war on the other. We know that this is not always the case. On the contrary, it often happens that one of the parties is under the influence of such a passion of one kind or another, that, in Pistol's phrase, incision there must be. Who, for example, could have charmed the Americans out of that 'earth-hunger' which impelled them into the late Mexican war? There are spirits of such a towering nature among rulers, that remonstrance is hopeless. Let it be tried, for instance, with the Emperor Nicholas, in regard to his efforts for the subjugation of Circassia! Or could any kind of intervention have availed with the English government at the close of 1792, in keeping it from rushing into hostilities against France? In that case there was no injury on either side worth speaking of to be redressed. The motive on the side of England was a terror of the threatened spread of democracy. What could any court of arbitration have done there? No, in such cases, dis-tressing as the consideration may be, there appears no recourse but to arms.

But it may be questioned—Should this consideration be so very distressing? Grant all the evils attending on war, it is still something to which human nature has never pronounced itself quite repugnant. On the contrary, many generous natures have professed a love for it. Men in general very readily become soldiers. The excitement of a campaign makes up to most persons engaged in it for all its unavoidable inconveniences. Armies fight, without complaining of it as a hardship, or weeping over its consequences. We never find an old soldier repentant of the course of his life. After even the most disastrous wars, nations quickly regain their usual strength, often, indeed, prompted by their very losses to a degree of exertion which becomes a permanent good. It often appears as if invasive and conquering wars, though painful in their immediate effects, accomplish a great good in the long-run, by bringing a more vigorous national intellect to bear upon a weaker, and thus communicating a fresh impulse to civilisation. Though, therefore, we could not, beforehand, feel entitled to say—Let there be an aggressive war upon that peaceful apathetic people, in order to spur them forward to a better career, yet when we see such an effect arise from the uncalculating and uncontrollable passions of men, we may be permitted to acknowledge the benefit. All of these are considerations which should at least make us hesitate before setting down war as an unmixed evil, or any wholly unrelieved outrage upon humanity. Let it not be forgotten that our present English nation is a result of several war-like invasions and conquests—that we should not have been in existence but for the results of war—and that in point of fact every pure descendant of the Saxon and Norman invaders is enjoying property of which the Britons were despoiled: these Britons, as is now ascertained, having been themselves spoilers of a previous race. Our country is altogether a battle-ground. The most prized of our institutions have been won by the sword. Would 'peaceful usurpation' ever have secured the revolution settlement and bill of rights? Force, it is humiliating to own, has been the basis of our civilisation; and we fear it must still remain, at least in *terrorem*, until the more general diffusion of knowledge enables mankind at large to understand their own interest. To begin the reform at the beginning, we must address ourselves to the masses, not to their governors; we must inform the popular mind, and bring instinct under the control of reason.

We think it would be well for the peace party to keep such things in view—we mean, both that war is not wholly avoidable in the present state of society, and that it is not an unqualified evil. It is of vast consequence, we conceive, for a party aiming at a great moral or social reform, to contemplate and to represent what is to be reformed in a just light. Stolid and

insensible as the great bulk of mankind often appear, there is nevertheless an instinctive common-sense throughout the mass that makes them very readily apprehend when a case is overstated, or when visionary and impracticable views are entertained. They say little, but it is because they view the matter with indifference. The subject is then left to the patronage of a few possessed of warmer hearts and less reflecting intellects than the mass; and the consequence is, that no advance is made towards the accomplishment of the object. If, on the contrary, the case of the reforming party is stated moderately, and no aim or hope expressed beyond what common-sense admits to be capable of fulfilment, a very different result may ensue.

We would have the advocates of Peace to divest their cause of everything which may appear extravagant both in the statement of the evils to be reformed, and in the expression of their hopes of improved arrangements. We would not merely have them to tame themselves and their language down into a strictly practical tone, but we would call upon them to abstain from all claims, as well as clamours, which proceed upon what must generally be felt as a false ideal of human nature. We would warn them particularly against such errors as the advocacy of the cause of the Borneo pirates. It is not merely visionary, but, what is far worse, it is an injustice to humanity to demand that wretches of that kind should be treated in a mild, remonstrative, or even reformatory way. They have always as yet been crushed like vermin wherever they were to be found, and they will be so treated while human nature lasts. It may be possible, no doubt, in time to reclaim even the Borneo pirates from their evil inclinations, and we hope this will be done; but the question is, what is to be done immediately or directly with a horde of villains whose occupation it is to plunder their harmless countrymen, killing the men, and carrying off into slavery the women and children? Will peace measures avail there? As well ask if a sermon will turn aside a bullet in its flight. There is a manful and righteous spirit which pronounces that such fiends may be dealt with summarily, and that no other measure will avail in driving them from their evil courses. So ninety-nine of every hundred of the people of England feel. What are these to think of the benevolent minority who call in rose-water surgery for such cases? Only—that they are a set of people too good for this world.

We think it is at the same time due to the gentlemen who come prominently forward for the advocacy of Peace, to view their proceedings in the most favourable light possible, and to make the handsomest acknowledgment of the goodness which is at the bottom of the movement. If it is an error to think too well of human nature, it is a generous error. If those who assume the possibility of putting down war, are sure to be looked upon as visionary, it is the more gallant in them, having such sentiments, to come forward and frankly avow them. Some allowance, too, ought always to be made for those who take up any great cause at its first outburst. At such a time, men do not usually stop to measure their propositions with exactness, or to look round for all the potential counteractions. There is always an excitement at the first embrace of a new principle, which makes its likelihoods somewhat obscure. In time, first errors are corrected, and more practical views adopted. We would claim for the Peace party the benefit of these considerations. And we would have the party itself to go on with hope of good

result within fair and rational bounds, and not to be too much discomfited should they find, as we are assured they will, that they have damaged their cause by the assumption of an extreme position.

### THE UNLAWFUL GIFT.

THE chastened glory of a bright autumnal evening was shining upon the yellow harvest fields of Bursley Farm, in the vicinity of the New Forest, and tinting with changeable light the dense but broken masses of thick wood which skirted the southern horizon, when Ephraim Lovegrove, a care-cankered, worn-out, dying man, though hardly numbering sixty years, was, at his constantly and peevishly-iterated request, lifted from the bed on which for many weeks he had been gradually and painfully wasting away, and carried in an arm-chair to the door. From the cottage, situated as it was upon an eminence, the low-lying lands of Bursley, and its straggling homestead, which once called him master, could be distinctly seen. The fading eyes of the old man wandered slowly over the gleaming landscape, and a faint smile of painful recognition stole upon his harsh and shrivelled features. His only son, a fine handsome young fellow, stood silently, with his wife, beside him—both, it seemed, as keenly, though not perhaps as bitterly, impressed with the scene and the thoughts it suggested; and their child, a rosy youngster of about five years of age, clung tightly to his mother's gown, frightened and awed apparently by the stern expression he read upon his father's face. A light summer air lifted the old man's thin white locks, fanned his hollow cheeks, and momentarily revived his fainting spirit. 'Ay,' he muttered, 'the old pleasant home, Ned, quiet, beautiful as ever. It's only we who change and pass away.'

'The home,' rejoined the son, 'of which we have been robbed—lawfully robbed.'

'I'm not so clear on that as I was,' said Ephraim Lovegrove, slowly and with difficulty. 'It was partly our own want of foresight—mine I mean of course: we ought not to have calculated on'—

The old man's broken accents stopped suddenly. The strength which the sight of his former home and the grateful breeze which swept up from the valley awakened, had quickly faded; and the daughter-in-law, touching her husband's arm, and glancing anxiously at his father's changing countenance, motioned that he should be reconveyed to bed. This was done, and a few spoonfuls of wine revived him somewhat. Edward Lovegrove left the cottage upon some necessary business; and his wife, after putting her child to bed, re-entered the sick-room, and seated herself with mute watchfulness by the bedside of her father-in-law.

'Ye are a kind, gentle creature, Mary,' said the dying man, whose failing gaze had been for some time fixed upon her pale, patient face; 'as kind and gentle—more so, it seems to me, in this poor hovel than when we dwelt in yon homestead, from which you, with us, have been so cruelly driven.'

'Murmuring, father,' she replied in a low sweet voice, 'would not help us. It is surely better to submit cheerfully to a hard lot than to chafe and fret one's life away at what cannot be helped. But it's easy for me,' she hastily added, fearing that her words might sound reproachfully in the old man's ear—'it's easy for me, who have health, a kind husband, and my little boy left me, to be cheerful, but it is scarcely so for you, suffering in body and mind, and tormented in a thousand ways.'

'Ay, girl, it has been a sharp trial; but it will soon be over. In a few hours it will matter little whether old Ephraim Lovegrove lived and died in a pig-sty or a palace. But I would speak of you. You and Ned should emigrate. There are countries, I am told, where you would be sure to prosper. That viper Nichols, I remember, once offered to assist—I could never make out from what motive—from what—a little wine,' he added feebly. 'The evening, for the time of year, is

very chilly: my feet and legs are cold as stones.' He swallowed the wine, and again addressed himself to speak, but his voice was scarcely audible. 'I have often thought,' he murmured, 'as I lay here, that Symons, Nichols' clerk, from a hint he dropped, knows something of—of—your mother and—and'—The faint accents ceased to be audible; but the grasp of the dying man closed tightly upon the frightened woman's hand, as he looked wildly in her face as he drew her towards him, as if some important statement remained untold. He struggled desperately for utterance, but the strife was vain, and brief as it was fierce: his grasp relaxed, and with a convulsive groan Ephraim Lovegrove fell back and expired.

The storm which had made shipwreck of the fortunes of Ephraim Lovegrove had levelled with the earth prouder roof-trees than his. In early life he had succeeded his father as the tenant of a farm in Wiltshire. He was industrious, careful, and ambitious; and aided by the sum of £500, which he received with his wife, and the high prices which agricultural produce obtained during the French war, he was enabled, at the expiration of his lease in Wiltshire, to become the proprietor of Bursley Farm. This purchase was effected when wheat ranged from £30 to £40 a load at a proportionately exorbitant price of £5000. His savings amounted to about one-half of this sum, and the remainder was raised by way of mortgage. Matters went on smoothly enough till the peace of 1815, and the subsequent precipitate fall in prices. Lovegrove showed gallant fight, hoping against hope that exceptional legislation would ultimately bolster up prices to something like their former level. He was deceived. Every day saw him sinking lower and lower; and in the sixth year of peace he was reluctantly compelled to abandon the long since desperate and hopeless struggle with adverse fortune. The interest on the borrowed money had fallen considerably in arrear, and Bursley Farm was sold by auction at a barely sufficient sum to cover the mortgage and accumulated interest. The stock was similarly disposed of, and stout Ephraim withdrew with his family to a small cottage in the neighbourhood of his old home, possessed, after his debts were discharged, of about thirty pounds in money and a few necessary articles of furniture. The old man's heart was broken: he took almost immediately to his bed, and after a long agony of physical pain, aggravated and embittered by mental disquietude and discontent, expired as we have seen, worn out in mind and body.

The future of the surviving family was a dark and anxious one. Edward Lovegrove, a frank, kindly-tempered young man, accustomed, in the golden days of farming, to ride occasionally after the hounds as well equipped and mounted as any in the field, was little fitted for a struggle for daily bread with the crowded competition of the world. He had several times endeavoured to obtain a situation as bailiff, but others more fortunate, perhaps better qualified, filled up every vacancy that offered, and the almost desperate man, but for the pleading helplessness of his wife and child, would have sought shelter in the ranks of the army—that grave in which so many withered prospects and broken hopes lie buried. As usual with disappointed men, his mind dwelt with daily-augmenting bitterness upon the persons at whose hands the last and decisive blows which had destroyed his home had been received. Sanders the mortgagee he looked upon as a monster of perfidy and injustice; but especially Nichols the attorney, who had superintended and directed the sale of the Bursley homestead, was regarded by him with the bitterest dislike. Other causes gave intensity to this vindictive feeling. The son of the attorney, Arthur Nichols, a wild, dissipated young man, had been a competitor for the hand of Mary Clarke, the sole child of Widow Clarke, and now Edward Lovegrove's wife. It was not at all remarkable or surprising that young Nichols should admire and seek to wed pretty and gentle Mary Clarke, but it was deemed strange by those who knew his father's

grasping, mercenary disposition, that he should have been so eager for the match, well knowing, as he did, for the payments passed through his hands, that the widow's modest annuity terminated with her life. It was also known, and wonderingly commented upon, that the attorney was himself an anxious suitor for the widow's hand up to the day of her sudden and unexpected decease, which occurred about three years after her daughter's marriage with Edward Lovegrove. Immediately after this event, as if some restraint upon his pent-up malevolence had been removed, the elder Nichols manifested the most active hostility towards the Lovegroves; and to his persevering enmity it was generally attributed that Mr Sanders had availed himself of the power of sale inserted in the mortgage deed to cast his unfortunate debtor helpless and homeless upon the world.

Sadly passed away the weary, darkening days with the young couple after the old man's death. The expenses of his long illness had swept away the little money saved from the wreck of the farm; and it required the sacrifice of Edward's watch and some silver teaspoons to defray the cost of a decent funeral. At last, spite of the thriftiest economy, all was gone, and they were penniless.

'You have nothing to purchase breakfast with to-morrow, have you, Mary?' said the husband, after partaking of a scanty tea. The mother had feigned only to eat: little Edward, whose curly head was lying in her lap as he sat asleep on a low stool beside her, had her share.

'Not a farthing,' she replied mildly, even cheerfully, and the glance of her gentle eyes was hopeful and kind as ever. 'But bear up Edward: we have still the furniture; and were that sold at once, it would enable us to reach London, where you know so many people have made fortunes who arrived there as poor as we.'

'Something must be done, that is certain,' replied the husband. 'We have not yet received an answer from Salisbury about the porter's place I have applied for.'

'No; but I would rather, for your sake, Edward, that you filled such a situation at some place further off, where you were not so well known.'

Edward Lovegrove sighed, and presently rising from his chair, walked towards a chest of drawers that stood at the further end of the room. His wife, who guessed his intention—for the matter had been already more than once hinted at—followed him with a tearful, apprehensive glance. Her husband played tolerably well—wonderfully in the wife's opinion—upon the flute, and a few weeks after their marriage, her mother had purchased and presented him with a very handsome one with silver keys. He used, in the old time, to accompany his wife in the simple ballads she sang so sweetly—and now this last memorial of the past, linked as it was with tender and pious memories, must be parted with! Edward Lovegrove had not looked at it for months: his life, of late so out of tune, would have made harsh discord of its music; and as he took it from the case, and, from the mere force of habit, moistened the joints, and placed the pieces together, a flood of bitterness swelled his heart to think that this solace of 'lang syne' must be sacrificed to their hard necessities. He blew a few tremulous and imperfect notes, which awakened the little boy, who was immediately clamorous that mammy should sing and daddy play as they used to do.

'Shall we try, Mary,' said the husband, 'to please the child?' Poor Mary bowed her head: her heart was too full to speak. The flutist played the prelude to a favourite air several times over before his wife could sufficiently command her voice to commence the song; and she had not reached the end of the second line when she stopped, choked with emotion, and burst into an agony of tears.

'It is useless trying, Mary,' said Edward Lovegrove soothingly, as he rose and put by the flute. 'I will to bed at once, for to and from Christchurch, where I



must dispose of it, is a long walk.' He kissed his wife and child, and went up stairs. The mother followed soon afterwards, put her boy to rest, and after looking wistfully for a few moments at the worn and haggard features of her husband as he lay asleep, re-descended the stairs, and busied herself with some necessary household work.

As she was thus employed, a slight tap at the little back window struck her ear, and looking sharply round, she recognised the pale, uncouth features of Symons, lawyer Nichols' deformed clerk and errand-man, who was eagerly beckoning her to open the casement. This was the person of whom Ephraim Lovegrove had spoken just previous to his death. Symons, who had never known father or mother, had passed his infancy and early boyhood in the parish workhouse, from whence he had passed into the service of Mr Nichols, who, finding him useful, and of some capacity, had retained him in his employ to the present time, but at so bare a stipend, as hardly sufficed to keep body and soul together. Poor Symons was a meek, enduring drudge, used to the mocks and buffets of the world; and except under the influence of strong excitement, hardly dared to rebel or murmur, even in spirit. His acquaintance with the Lovegrove family arose from his being placed in possession of the furniture and stock of Bursley Farm under a writ of *fi. fa.* issued by Nichols. On the day the inventory was taken, in preparation for the sale, a heavy piece of timber which he was assisting to measure fell upon his left foot, and severely crushed it. From his master he received only a malediction for his awkwardness; but young Mrs Lovegrove—not so much absorbed in her own grief as to be indifferent to the sufferings of others—had him brought carefully into the house, and herself tended his painful hurt with the gentlest care and compassion, and ultimately effected a thorough cure. This kindness to a slighted, deformed being, who before had scarcely comprehended the meaning of the word, powerfully affected Symons; and he had since frequently endeavoured, in his shy, awkward way, to testify the deep gratitude he felt towards his benefactress, of whose present extreme poverty he, in common with every other inhabitant of the scattered hamlet, had of course become fully cognisant. Charity Symons—the parish authorities had so named him, in order, doubtless, that however high he might eventually rise in the world, he should never ungratefully forget his origin—beckoned, as I have said, eagerly to the lone woman, and the instant she opened the casement, he thrust a rather heavy bag into her hand.

'For you,' he said hurriedly: 'I got it for next to nothing of Tom Stares; but mind not a word! God bless and reward you!' and before Mrs Lovegrove could answer a word, or comprehend what was meant, he had disappeared.

On opening the bag, she surprised and affrighted woman found that it contained a fine hen-pheasant and a hare! No wonder she was alarmed at finding herself in possession of such articles; for in those good old days game could not be lawfully sold or purchased; and unless it could be distinctly proved that it came by gift from a qualified killer, its simple possession was a punishable offence. This pheasant and hare had doubtless been poached by Tom Stares, a notorious offender against the game-laws; but what was to be done? Spite of all the laws that were enacted upon the subject, the peasant and farmer intellect of England could never be made to attach a moral delinquency to the unauthorised killing of game. A dangerous occupation, leading to no possible good, and eventually sure to result in evil to the transgressor, prudent men agreed it was; but as for confounding the stealing of a wooden spoon, worth a penny, with the snaring of a hare, worth perhaps five shillings—that never entered anybody's head. And thus it happened that Mrs Lovegrove, though conscious that the hare and bird had been illegally obtained, felt nothing of the instinctive horror

and shame that would have mantled her forehead had she been made the recipient of a stolen threepenny-worth of cheese or bacon. She recalled to mind the journey her husband must take in the morning—he weak, haggard for want of food—of which here was an abundant present supply: her boy, too, who had twice at tea-time, ere he fell asleep, asked vainly for more bread! As these bitter thoughts glanced through her brain, a sharp double rap at the door caused her to start like a guilty thing, and then hastily undo her apron, and throw it over the betraying present. The door was not locked, and the postman, impatient of delay, lifted the latch, and stepped into the room. Was he soon enough to observe what was on the table? Mary Lovegrove would have thought so, but for the unconcerned, indifferent aspect of the man as he presented a letter, and said, 'It's prepaid; all right;' and without further remark, went away. The anxious and nervous woman trembled so much, that she could hardly break the seal of the letter; and the words, as she strove to make out the cramped hand by the brilliant moonlight, danced confusedly before her eyes. At last she was able to read. The letter was from Salisbury, and announced that Mr Brodie 'regretted to say, as he had known and respected the late Ephraim Lovegrove, that he had engaged a person to fill the situation which had been vacant a few hours previous to his receiving Edward Lovegrove's application.' That plank, then, had sunk under them like all the rest! A hard word, she thought, and but little entitled to obedience or respect from the wretches trampled down in its iron course. Edward should not, at all events, depart foodless on his morning's errand; neither should her boy lack breakfast. On this she was now determined, and with shaking hands and flushed cheek, she hastily set about preparing the bird for the morning meal—a weak and criminal act if you will; but a mother seldom reasons when a child lacks food: she only feels.

Edward Lovegrove very easily reconciled himself to the savoury breakfast which awaited him in the morning; and he and his son were doing ample justice to it—the wife, though faint with hunger, could not touch a morsel—when the latch of the door suddenly lifted, and in hurried Thompson the miller, and chief constable of the Hundred, followed by an assistant. A faint scream escaped from Mrs Lovegrove, and a fierce oath broke from her husband's lips, as they recognised the new-comers, and too readily divined their errand.

'A charming breakfast, upon my word!' exclaimed the constable, laughing. 'Roasted pheasant—no less! Our information was quite correct, it appears.'

'What is the meaning of this, and what do you seek here?' exclaimed Edward Lovegrove.

'You and this game, of which we are informed you are unlawfully possessed. I hope,' added the constable, a feeling, good sort of man—'I hope you will be able to prove both that this half-eaten pheasant and the hare I see hanging yonder were presented to you by some person having a right to make such gifts?'

A painful and embarrassing pause ensued. It would have been useless, as far as themselves were concerned, to have named Charity Symons, even had Lovegrove or his wife been disposed to subject him to the penalties of the law and the anger of his employer.

'After all,' observed the constable, who saw how matters stood, 'it is but a money penalty.'

'A money penalty!' exclaimed Lovegrove. 'It is imprisonment—ruin—starvation for my wife and child. Look at these bare walls—these threadbare garments—and say if it can mean anything else!'

'I am sorry for it,' rejoined Thompson. 'The penalty is a considerable one: five pounds for each head of game, with costs; and I am afraid, if Sir John Devenreux' agent—lawyer Nichols—presses the charge, in default of payment, six months' imprisonment! Sir John's preserves have suffered greatly of late.'

'It is that rascal, that robber Nichols' doing then!' fiercely exclaimed Lovegrove. 'I might have guessed

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'Tut—tut!' interrupted the constable: 'it's no use calling names, nor uttering threats we don't mean to perform. Perhaps matters may turn out better than you think. In the meantime you must appear before Squire Digby, and so must your hare and what remains of your breakfast.'

Arrived before the magistrate, the prisoner, taken in '*flagrant delict*,' had of course no valid defence to offer. The justice remarked upon the enormity of the offence committed, and regretted exceedingly that he could not at once convict and punish the delinquent; but as the statute required that two magistrates should concur in the conviction, the case would be adjourned till that day week, when a petty sessions would be held. In the meantime he should require bail in ten pounds for the prisoner's appearance. This would have been tantamount to a sentence of immediate imprisonment, had not the constable, who had been formerly intimate with the Lovegroves, stepped forward and said, that if the prisoner would give him his word that he would not abscond, he would bail him. This was done, and the necessary formalities complete, the husband and wife took their sad way homewards.

What was now to be done? Their furniture, if sold at its highest value, would barely discharge the penalties incurred, and they would be homeless, penniless, utterly without resource! The wife wept bitterly, accusing herself as the cause of this utter ruin; her husband indulged in fierce and senseless abuse of Nichols, and in a paroxysm of fury seized a sheet of letter-paper, tore it hastily in halves, and scribbled a letter to the attorney full of threats of the direst vengeance. This crazy epistle he signed 'A Ruined Man,' and without pausing to reflect on what he was doing, despatched his little boy to the post-office with it. This mad proceeding appeared to have somewhat relieved him: he grew calmer, strove to console his wife, went out and obtained credit at the chandler's—the first time they had made such a request—for a few necessities; and after a short interval, the unfortunate couple were once more discussing their sad prospects with calmness and partially-renewed hope. More than once Edward Lovegrove wished he had not sent the letter to Nichols; but he said nothing to his wife about it, and she, it afterwards appeared, had been so pre-occupied at the time, as not to heed or inquire to whom or of what he was writing.

On the third day after Edward Lovegrove's appearance before the magistrate, he set off about noon for Christchurch, in order to dispose of his flute—a sacrifice which could no longer be delayed. It was growing late, and his wife was sitting up in impatient expectation of his return, when an alarm of 'Fire' was raised, and it was announced that a wheat-rick belonging to Nichols, who farmed in a small way, was in flames. Many of the villagers hastened to the spot; but the fire, by the time they arrived, had been effectually got under, and after hanging about the premises a short time, they turned homewards. Edward Lovegrove joined a party of them, and incidentally remarked that he had been to Christchurch, where he had met young Nichols, and had some rough words with him: on his return, the young man had passed him on horseback when about two miles distant from the elder Nichols' house, and just as he (Lovegrove) neared the attorney's premises, the rick burst into flames. This relation elicited very little remark at the time, and bidding his companions good-night, Lovegrove hastened home.

'The constables are looking for you,' said a young woman, abruptly entering the chandler's shop, whither Edward Lovegrove had proceeded the following morning to discharge the trifling debt he had incurred.

'For me?' exclaimed the startled young man.

'Yes, for you; and,' added the girl with a meaning look and whisper, 'if you were near the five last night, I would advise you to make yourself scarce for a time.'

Her words conveyed no definite meaning to Edward Lovegrove's mind. The fire! Constables after him! He left the shop, and took, with hasty steps, his way to the cottage, distant over the fields about a quarter of a mile.

'Lawyer Nichols' fire,' he muttered as he hurried along. 'Surely they do not mean to accuse me of that!'

The sudden recollection of the threatening letter he had sent glanced across and smote, as with the stroke of a dagger, upon his brain. 'Good God! to what have I exposed myself?'

His agitation was excessive; and at the instant the constables, who had been to his home in search of him, turned the corner of a path, a few paces ahead, and came full upon him. In his confusion and terror he turned to flee, but so weakly and irresolutely, that he was almost immediately overtaken and secured.

'I would not have believed this of you, Edward Lovegrove,' exclaimed the constable.

'Believed what?' ejaculated the bewildered man.

'That you would have tried to revenge yourself on Lawyer Nichols by such a base, dastardly trick. But it's not my business to reproach you, and the less you say the better. Come along.'

As they passed on towards the magistrate's house, an eager and curious crowd gradually collected and accompanied them; and just as they reached Digby Hall, a distant convulsive scream, and his name frantically pronounced by a voice which the prisoner but too well recognised, told him that his wife had heard of his capture, and was hurrying to join him. He drew back, but his captors urged him impatiently on; the hall-door was slammed in the faces of the crowd, and he found himself in the presence of the magistrate and the elder Nichols.

The attorney, who appeared to be strongly agitated, deposed in substance that the prisoner had been seen by his son near his premises a few minutes before the fire burst out; that he had abused and assaulted young Mr Nichols but a few hours previously in the market at Christchurch; and that he had himself received a threatening letter, which he now produced, only two days before, and which he believed to be in the prisoner's handwriting.

The prisoner, bewildered by terror, eagerly denied that he wrote the letter.

This unfortunate denial was easily disposed of, by the production, by the constable, of a half sheet of letter-paper found in the cottage, the ragged edge of which precisely fitted that of the letter. Edward Lovegrove would have been fully committed at once, but that the magistrate thought it desirable that the deposition of Arthur Nichols should be first formally taken. This course was reluctantly acquiesced in by the prosecutor, and the prisoner was remanded to the next day.

The dismay of Charity Symons, when he found that his well-intentioned present had only brought additional suffering upon the Lovegroves, was intense and bitter; but how to help them he knew not. He had half made up his mind to obtain—no matter by what means—a sight of certain papers which he had long dimly suspected would make strange revelations upon matters affecting Mary Lovegrove, when the arrest of her husband on a charge of incendiarism thoroughly determined him to risk the expedient he had long hesitatingly contemplated. The charge, he was quite satisfied in his own mind, was an atrocious fabrication, strongly as circumstances seemed to colour and confirm it.

The clerk, as he sat that afternoon in the office, silently pursuing his ill-paid drudgery, noticed that his employer was strangely ill at ease. He was restless, and savagely impatient of the slightest delay on the most necessary question. Evening fell early—it was now near the end of October, and Symons, with a respectful bow, left the office. A few minutes afterwards, the attorney having carefully locked his desk, iron chest, &c. and placed the keys in his pocket, followed.

Two hours had elapsed, when Symons re-entered the house by the back way, walked through the kitchen, softly ascended the stairs, and groped his way to the inner, private office. There was no moon, and he dared not light a candle; but the faint starlight fortunately enabled him to move about without stumbling or noise. He mounted the office steps, and inserted the edge of a sharp broad chisel between the lock and the lid of a heavy iron-bound box marked 'C.' The ease and suddenness with which the lid yielded to the powerful effort he applied to it, overthrew his balance, and he with difficulty saved himself from falling on the floor. The box was not locked, and on putting his hand into it, he discovered that it was entirely empty! The tell-tale papers had been removed, probably destroyed! At the moment Symons made this exasperating discovery, the sound of approaching footsteps struck upon his startled senses, and shaking with fright, he had barely time to descend the steps, and coop himself up in a narrow cupboard under one of the desks, when the Nichols, father and son, entered the office—the former with a candle in his hand.

'We are private here,' said the father in a low, guarded voice; 'and I tell you you *must* listen to reason.'

'I don't like it a bit,' rejoined the young man. 'It's a cowardly, treacherous business; and as for swearing I saw him near the fire when it so strangely burst out, I won't do it at any price.'

'Listen to me, you foolish, headstrong boy,' retorted the elder Nichols, 'before you decide on beggary for yourself, and ruin—the gallows, perhaps, for me.'

'Wh-e-e-e-w! Why, what do you mean?'

'I will tell you. You already know that Mary Woodhouse married Robert Clarke against his uncle's consent; you also know that Robert Clarke died about five years after the marriage, and that the seventy pounds a year which the uncle allowed his nephew to keep him from starvation was continued to be paid through me to his widow.'

'Yes, I have heard all this before.'

'But you do not know,' continued the attorney in an increasingly-agitated voice, 'that about six years after Robert Clarke's death, the uncle so far relented towards the widow and daughter—though he would never see either of them—as to increase the annuity to two hundred pounds, and that at his death, four years since, he bequeathed Mrs Clarke five hundred pounds per annum, with succession to her daughter: all of which sums, I, partly on account of your riot and extravagance, have appropriated.'

'Good heaven—what a horrible affair! What would you have me do?'

'I have told you. The dread of discovery has destroyed my health, and poisoned my existence. Were he once out of the country, his wife would doubtless follow him; detection would be difficult; conviction, as I will manage it, impossible.'

There was more said to the same effect; and the son, at the close of a long and troubled colloquy, departed, after promising to 'consider of it.'

He had been gone but a few minutes; the elder Nichols was silently meditating the perilous position in which he had placed himself, when a noiseless step approached him from behind, and a heavy hand was suddenly placed upon his shoulder. He started wildly to his feet, and confronted the stern and triumphant glance of the once humble and submissive Charity Symons. The suddenness of the shock overcame him, and he fainted.

Mary Lovegrove, whose child had sobbed itself to sleep, was sitting in solitude and darkness in the lower room of the cottage, her head bowed in mute and tearless agony upon the table, when, as on a previous evening, a tap at the back window challenged her attention. It was once more Charity Symons. 'What do you here again?' exclaimed the wretched wife with some asperity of tone: 'you no doubt intended well; but you have nevertheless ruined, destroyed me.'

'Not so,' rejoined the deformed clerk, his pale, uncouth, but expressive features gleaming with wild exultation in the clear starlight. 'God has at last enabled me to requite your kindness to a contemned outcast. Fear not for to-morrow. Your husband is safe, and you are rich.' With these words he vanished.

On the next morning a letter was placed in the magistrate's hands from Mr Nichols, stating that circumstances had come to the writer's knowledge which convinced him that Edward Lovegrove was entirely innocent of the offence imputed to him; that the letter, which he had destroyed, bore quite another meaning from that which he had first attributed to it; and that he consequently abandoned the prosecution. On further inquiry, it was found that the attorney had left his house late the preceding night, accompanied by his son, had walked to Christchurch, and from thence set off post for London. His property and the winding up of his affairs had been legally confided to his late clerk. Under these circumstances the prisoner was of course immediately discharged; and after a private interview with Symons, returned in joy and gladness to his now temporary home. He was accompanied by the noisy felicitations of his neighbours, to whom his liberation and sudden accession to a considerable fortune had become at the same moment known. As he held his passionately-weeping wife in his arms, and gazed with grateful emotion in her tearful but rejoicing eyes, he whispered, 'That kind act of yours towards the despised hunchback has saved me, and enriched our child.' Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy!"

#### SELF-IMPOSED TAXATION.

THE ratio of taxation as respects different classes has been a topic frequently discussed, and it seems to be a generally-confirmed impression that the humbler or manual labouring population pay a largely-disproportionate share of all the taxes that are levied. This is true in one sense, but not in another. There are two kinds of taxation—involuntary and voluntary: of the involuntary, the classes referred to can scarcely be said to contribute anything. Let us take the case of a Scottish rural labourer, with whose mode of life we are best acquainted. His house, which has at most three or four windows, is subject to no tax: his small garden or patch of ground is equally exempt: the clothes of himself and family, made from native wool, and from cotton or flax, are also untaxed: the family food, consisting of oatmeal porridge, milk, eggs, bread, cheese, potatoes, with usually a little ham and butcher meat, is likewise untaxed: his Bible is printed on untaxed paper,\* and bound with untaxed leather: the furniture of his cottage, made from plain materials, is liable to no fiscal exaction: he pays not a farthing for his seat in the parish church: for his baptism, marriage, and funeral, no fee is sought or taken by the parish minister; in short, all the ordinances of religion are to him free: the pressure of poor-rates, road-rates, and county-rates, he never feels, for the rate collector never enters his door any more than the tax collector. From his cradle to his grave, the manual labourer is not called on to contribute a single hour to public business. Tradesmen, farmers, and other members of the middle-class, are ordinarily called on to serve from two to three whole days—sometimes six days—per annum, as jurors. From this odious and costly sacrifice of time to public duty, the manual labouring-class is altogether exempt.† We are glad to add

\* The paper on which Bibles are printed is exempt from Excise duty.

† On a late occasion, at the sheriff's criminal court in Edinburgh, a working-man complained bitterly of being summoned to attend as a juror, on the ground that his time was taken without payment. The audience were amused with the attempts of the returning officer to prove to the satisfaction of the complainant that 'his respectable appearance entitled him to the honour of sitting in the jury box.' Of course these efforts were unavailing: the man could only see that he lost a day, equivalent to three shillings in money.



that now, at least, no man, whether high or low, is exposed to the risk of being balloted for the militia. With his earnings his own, his time his own, his conscience his own, and without the slightest obstruction to his freedom in moving from place to place, the manual labourer, so far as will is concerned, may be said to be altogether untaxed; and yet while contributing neither money nor time to the state, he unquestionably can invoke the whole powers of our social organization in maintaining his rights. If he can show that he is oppressed, he will get law for nothing; his life and property are guarded by police of whose support he is unconscious. Dwelling in his obscure cottage, remote from cities, he and the least among his family are as much objects of regard to the greatest of our judges as are the mightiest in the land; and were he a wandering beggar, the degree of protection accorded to him would be the same.

In what respect, then, is the labouring-man taxed? Exempted from all sorts of direct taxes and rates, he is taxed in an indirect and unseen manner; yet only in relation to one absolute necessary of existence is this taxation involuntary. We allude to the article soap, which, to the discredit of the nation, is still the subject of an Excise duty; and therefore, as no family, with any regard to cleanliness and health, can avoid the use of this article, the labouring-man in Great Britain is not quite untaxed against his will.\* Supposing that the consumption of soap by the family of a man in this class is half a pound a week, the tax paid by him on this account, at the rate of three-halfpence per pound, will amount to 3s. 3d. in the course of a year—a very small sum, it will be allowed, to represent the social advantages to which we have called attention. Supposing, however, that the labouring-man indulges in literary productions, he comes in for an additional exaction; because even the cheapest books and periodicals—the works specially prepared for his intellectual and moral improvement—are subject to an Excise duty also of three-halfpence per pound. Making a reasonable allowance on this score, we may arrive at the conclusion that the working-man cannot possibly escape without contributing somewhere about four shillings a year for the public good. In this estimate, no account is taken of the enhancement in value of every manufactured article which is consumed, in consequence of the heavy taxes to which the higher class of producers are exposed; the very gown that the artisan buys for his wife being possibly a shade higher in price than it would be under a lighter pressure of fiscal burthens. It would, however, baffle the ablest computer to say how much or how little the labouring-classes suffer in this oblique manner. Generally speaking, the increase of price must be trifling.

All this may be statistically true, and yet the melancholy fact remains, that the manual labouring-classes pay a large proportion of the taxes. They pay, however, voluntarily. If it be their pleasure, and they can remain satisfied with plain and temperate fare, they need not pay more than the three or four shillings per annum exigible from them as a portion of the price of soap, books, and newspapers; and were the Excise duty on these articles removed, as we trust it will soon be, the labouring-man would not be called on to contribute one fraction to the state. With a full perception of this great truth, let us see in what way the labouring-classes are such liberal taxpayers. They pay, we have said, voluntarily. They tax themselves, because they resort to the use of liquors and other articles which are subject to heavy Excise and custom-house duties. On this subject it is our desire to be quite candid. Tea and coffee are pleasant beverages, and may be said to have become necessities of life with a large number of people; but it is an equally indisputable fact that numbers among the rural population never taste tea or coffee, or at all events they use them

only on special and rare occasions; and nevertheless these individuals enjoy robust health. Do not, however, let it be imagined that we argue for the disuse of these articles; our feeling is the reverse. The consumption of tea and coffee is commendable, as indicative of improved habits and tastes; and the only room for regret is the costliness of the articles, in consequence of the duties with which they are chargeable. Allowing that the family of a working-man consumes about eight pounds of tea in the course of a year, the amount of his contribution to the state, including the items above noted, will be not more than twenty shillings. If coffee be used instead of tea, the contribution will be very much less. It is not, indeed, in the consumption of either tea or coffee, or in the use of sugar—a confection, by the way, quite unnecessary, if not positively injurious—that the manual labouring-classes show any extravagance. Self-imposed taxation, to any extent worth mentioning, lies in another direction—the abusive use of stimulants. We refer to spirits, ale, beer, porter, tobacco, and snuff; these being in reality the articles through whose agency the labouring-classes contribute so largely to the national exchequer. On this point we happily do not need to present our own imperfect calculations. The subject was treated with masterly precision by Mr G. R. Porter, of the Board of Trade, in a paper which he read at the late meeting of the British Association. We invite attention to the following abstract of this valuable paper:—

‘The quantity of spirits of home production consumed in 1849 within the kingdom was—

In England,	9,083,676 imperial gallons
Scotland,	6,395,908    “    “
Ireland,	6,973,333    “    “

Together, 22,962,012 do. do.

—the duty upon which quantity amounted to L.5,793,381. The wholesale cost, including the duty, would probably amount to about L.8,000,000, a sum which would, however, be very far short of that paid by the consumers. According to the best calculations, the retail price to the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, in 1849, was L.17,381,643, thus divided—

England,	L.8,838,768
Scotland,	5,369,968
Ireland,	3,173,007

L.17,381,643

To this must be added the sum spent for rum, nearly the whole of which is used by the same classes as consume the gin and whisky, of which the cost is here estimated. The consumption of rum in 1849 amounted to 3,044,758 imperial gallons, the duty paid on which was L.1,142,855. The class of consumers being the same, and the means of distribution nearly if not wholly identical, it may fairly be assumed that the cost to the consumer bears an equal relation to the duty with that assigned to British spirits, in which case the expenditure for this kind of spirit will reach L.3,428,565, making the whole outlay of the people for these two descriptions of ardent spirits L.20,810,208, thus locally divided—

England,	L.8,305,248
Scotland,	6,383,114
Ireland,	6,121,833

L.20,810,208

If, for the purpose of the calculation, we assume that the population of the three divisions of the United Kingdom was the same in 1849 as it was found to be at the enumeration of 1841, the consumption per head in the year was—

In England,	0.369 gallons
Scotland,	0.647    “    “
Ireland,	0.553    “    “

These proportions are such as would fall to the share of each man, woman, and child throughout the land; but it must be evident that many, and especially the women and children, can count for very little in the calculation, if indeed they should not be wholly discarded from it. Adopting this latter view, and dividing

\* In Ireland, no Excise duty is charged on soap.

the quantity consumed among the adult males in all ranks of life, as they were ascertained in 1841, the following portions would fall to the share of each—

In England, 3,330 gallons, or about 3½ gallons	
Scotland, 11,168	... 11½
Ireland, 3,469	... 3½

‘On brandy there is expended the sum of L.3,281,250 per annum; but this liquor is consumed chiefly by the middle and higher classes. [Of wines of various kinds no account is taken; for they are not used by the classes to whom we are referring.]

‘While whisky is the chief excisable liquor used in Scotland and Ireland, beer in its various forms is consumed principally in England. By the most careful calculations, it would appear that the sum spent annually on beer, ale, and porter, amounts to L.25,383,165.

‘Next, as regards tobacco, in its various forms. The quantity of manufactured tobacco upon which duty was paid in 1849 was 27,480,621 lbs., and of manufactured tobacco and snuff 205,066 lbs., yielding a revenue of L.4,408,017, 14s. 11d. The retail price ranges from 4s. to 14s. per lb., 17-20ths, or 85 per cent., of the whole being of the lowest price here named, and only about 2 per cent. being of the highest quality—proportions which were stated by several respectable manufacturers who gave evidence before a committee of the House of Commons in 1845. On the same authority we are told that an addition is made of other ingredients in the processes of manufacture, amounting to 15 per cent. upon the 85 per cent., which consists of cut or shag, and roll tobacco, while the snuff, which comprises 13 out of 15 parts of the remainder, admits of an increased weight to the extent of from 50 to 60 per cent. The average price of six qualities of tobacco is at present 5s. 2d. per lb., and that of the five qualities of snuff is 7s. 6d. per lb. The great bulk of the consumption falls upon the lowest-priced quality of tobacco, which is 3d. per oz., or 4s. per lb. It cannot, therefore, give an exaggerated view of the sum expended for this article, if we assume that lowest price as being paid for the whole. In regard to snuff, a larger proportion of the whole than in the case of tobacco is used by the middling and easy classes, to whom the difference of a penny in the price of an ounce of snuff cannot be any object, and who rarely, if ever, will buy the most inferior quality. The prices, it will be seen, run from 5s. 4d. to 8s. per lb.; if we take the mean of these two prices as the average of the whole—that is, 6s. 8d. per lb.—we shall probably be within the mark. At these rates, the cost to the consumers generally will be as follows:—

26,992,308 lbs. of tobacco, at 4s. per lb.,	L.5,372,461
5,537,344 lbs. snuff, at 6s. 8d.,	1,845,781
349,612 lbs. English-made segars at 9s.,	247,325

Total for British-manufactured,	L.7,465,567
205,066 foreign-manufactured at 12s.,	125,040

Total value as paid by consumers,	L.7,589,607
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which amount would yield 50 per cent. above the cost of the tobacco as imported, and the duty paid thereon—a moderate increase to defray all the expenses of manufacture, and the charges attendant upon the retailing of an article nearly the whole of which is paid for in copper coins.

‘If it be conceded that the sums here brought forward are justified by the facts and calculations on which they are based, it would appear that the people, and chiefly the working-classes of England, Scotland, and Ireland, voluntarily tax themselves for the enjoyment of only three articles, neither of which is of any absolute necessity, to the following amount:—

British and Colonial spirits,	L.20,810,208
Brandy,	3,281,250
Total of spirits,	L.24,091,458
Beer of all kinds, exclusive of that brewed in private families,	L.25,383,165
Tobacco and snuff,	7,589,607
	L.57,063,230

‘The amount of self-imposed taxation may be judged from these figures, and we may easily imagine the increased degree of comfort and prosperity among the humbler classes generally by the disuse of spirits and other ministrants of intemperance. There is one consideration arising out of this view of the subject which is of a painful character, and which, if it were hopeless of cure, would be most disheartening to all who desire that the moral progress of the people should advance at least at an equal pace with their physical progress. It is, that among the working-classes so very large a portion of the earnings of the male head of the family is devoted by him to his personal and sensual gratifications. It has been computed that, among those whose earnings are from 10s. to 15s. weekly, at least one-half is spent by the man upon objects in which the other members of the family have no share. Among artisans earning from 20s. to 30s. weekly, it is said that at least one-third of the amount is in many cases thus selfishly devoted. That this state of things need not be, and that, if the people generally were better instructed as regards their social duties, it would not be, may safely be inferred from the fact, that it is rarely, if ever, found to exist in the numerous cases where earnings not greater than those of the artisan class are all that are gained by the head of the family when employed upon matters where education is necessary. Take even the case of a clerk with a salary of L.80 a year, a small fraction beyond 30s. a week, and it would be considered quite exceptional if it were found that anything approaching to a fourth part of the earnings were spent upon objects in which the wife and children should have no share. The peer, the merchant, the clerk, the artisan, and the labourer, are all of the same nature, born with the same propensities, and subject to the like influences. It is true they are placed in very different circumstances—the chief difference being that of their early training—one, happily, which it is quite possible in some degree to remedy, and that by means which would in many ways add to the sum of the nation's prosperity and respectability.

Little remains to be added. It must be apparent that through the use of intoxicating agents the manual labouring-classes, who are the principal consumers, contribute a very large sum annually to the exchequer—probably ten millions in the aggregate. This is not the place to debate the much-vexed question, whether taxation should be direct or indirect. The fact is at least conclusive, that by the present system, taxation is in a great measure the penalty of improvidence, and comparative exemption from fiscal burthens the reward of the prudently temperate and economical.

## A TWELVEMONTH IN CALCUTTA.

DWARKANATH TAGORE—A NATIVE FETE—PARSEE MERCHANTS—DUM-DUM—CATCHING COLD—THE RACES—A FORENOON AT THE MINT.

January 9th.—Dwarkanauth Tagore, a very wealthy native Baboo, of high character and great influence, gave the party I mentioned yesterday in his garden house. He is not so popular among his own countrymen as he is with the Europeans, although he entertains them in a most princely manner, and gives away a great deal of money to the poor. They consider him as a sort of renegade from their religion, because he laughs at absurd customs, disregards objectionable superstitions, and eats with us. His manners are really very like ours, although he has not adopted our dress, nor become a Christian. He is by birth a Brahmin of the highest caste of Hindoos; he owns a great deal of land round about Calcutta, and also in remoter parts of the country; and as his talents are unquestionable, he commands a certain degree of outward respect even from the most bigoted of his ignorant compatriots. Many of the more enlightened must be aware of the follies taught by their priesthood, though they want the courage openly to imi-



tate or admire him who has bravely thrown off these prejudices. Their true sentiments we can never know. We cannot penetrate into their domestic sanctuaries, to hear their honest opinions, if they have such, in their familiar conversations with their friends. If we could, we might discover what we now only guess at, and so think better of a race who appear to us only as a money-making, money-loving, reserved, and little-enlightened class, almost the slaves of gold; for they are all engaged in trade, even the landed proprietors, and they let out their ground in small patches to the lower ranks, exacting from the poor day-labourer a rent exorbitant for his means. Most of these Baboos speak English pretty well. They adopt as much of our habits as they dare, and they live as much with us as their rules of caste admit of. They are very efficient partners in our mercantile houses, and they therefore must, in the course of time, follow in the bolder wake of Dwarkanauth, whose intelligent feasciness has led him to overstep the boundary line half a century before the rest of his countrymen.

His party this night was in honour of one of our great ladies who is going home—a farewell—and he had spared no pains to make the fête agreeable. Expense, I fancy, he never thinks of. The garden-house is about three miles from Calcutta, on the road to Dum-Dum, and the invitation being to a ball and supper, Edward, Caroline, and I dined quietly with Mr Black and Helen, and had a good romp with the children, magic music, and all sorts of things, before dressing. Mr Black is one of the partners in Dwarkanauth's house, so that we felt as if connected with our entertainer. As we drove up the long sweep from the entrance-gate of the garden, I was taken quite by surprise, for every tree was illuminated—the gate itself was a blaze of light; and a small temple near the house was so brilliant, it reminded us all, in little, of the palace built by Aladdin's lamp. We drove up amid all this glory, and alighted at the foot of a handsome flight of steps, where a brother of our host, in a flowing native garb, was waiting to receive us. By him we were ushered into the fine suite of rooms on the upper storey, all thrown open to the company, and as light as noon-day in this land of the sun, crowded with all the respectable community of Calcutta—every European we had almost ever seen before, and a good sprinkling of natives, whose graceful dress had the best effect when so well disposed as we observed it to be on this occasion. The white muslin turban was in general particularly well put on, and the handsome shawl round the waist greatly improved the tunic. Some few hung the end of their Cachemire over one shoulder, like the belted plaid of the Highlander; but I did not admire this fashion; neither can I reconcile myself to the high stiff cap of the Parsee, made of a dark lilac silk. Dwarkanauth was not in white; he wore a dress of kincab—a rich silk ground with gold flowers, made up to the collar-bone, leaving the throat bare, and with open hanging sleeves. The white shirt was underneath this, and longer, coming down over the trousers like a short scanty petticoat, which did not look well. On his head he had a green velvet cap with a gold band and tassel—not nearly so becoming to Hindoo features as the turban—and a shawl, worth more than you or I would give for it, round his waist. He received his company with ease and dignity, making us all feel at home in the house of this merchant prince. Very soon after our arrival the fireworks began. I have seen very few in my life, none very good, so perhaps I thought more of these than they merited; but I really cannot fancy any show more magical. Besides rockets, and spires of flame, and stars of fire, increasing into streams as they descended, a play of fountains appearing in a semicircle, pouring down showers of sparks one against the other, amazed me with its extraordinary beauty: it was the realisation of the golden fountain of the Arabian tale. There was a fortress, too, attacked, and stormed; and blown-up ships—altogether an astonishing effect created by simple means. Some one said these were inferior to the

display of the same sort given some time before by Dwarkanauth; if so, we have a very faint idea at home of the perfection of the pyrotechnic art in India. This beautiful exhibition lasted about an hour, the guests watching it from the veranda, while the crowd of natives outside surrounded the tank, which was the safe theatre of these experiments, their dusky forms well suiting the fiery region of which for the moment they seemed to be the fit inhabitants. The ball immediately followed; and a costly supper, served exactly in our own style, concluded this very handsome entertainment.

10th.—This must surely be the dinner-giving season: every evening there is a party somewhere. Edward and Caroline are hardly ever now at home, and their friends are so hospitable, we are generally included in the invitations; we have the wisdom, however, to accept very few. We could not, in our position, continue such a course of gaiety, and we therefore think it more prudent not to entangle ourselves in so idly-busy a life. To some of the burra khanaes we go without any feeling of this sort, because people in high places consider these dinners a part of their duties, and expect no return. At one of these we assisted to-night: nearly forty people, and a great round of beef and other big joints of a like nature; but a dish in the second course was what most drew my attention. It was a corner dish—a pyramid—most ingeniously erected, of snipes, as they pile cannon-balls or turnips. I hope I am not growing affected: I did not use to be so; but I took a horror at this dish, which I daresay was considered a wonder of beautiful invention by the cooks and the khansamaun. The great quantity of large pieces of beef and mutton is far from pleasant late at night in this hot climate; but those horrid snipes, with all the hard part of the heads turned out, seemed like a mound of skulls: nothing would have induced me to eat one of them. Indeed these very crowded eating-parties are not agreeable. Do you remember what our witty friend called the dinners of sixteen and eighteen which with us at home are reckoned full-sized?—'A meeting of creditors!'

12th.—Another sort of dinner to which we feel privileged to go is among the family connexions; and we had particular pleasure in dining this evening with Mr Black and Helen, because two Parsee merchants, father and son, were to be of the party. It did look a little strange to see them in their white dresses and curious high caps seated so much at their ease among us. Their manners, however, quite fit them for our society, which they seem to enjoy—the lady-part of it particularly. They speak English with sufficient fluency to carry on a conversation very comfortably, for they are very intelligent men. They ate neither beef nor pork, but had no objection to any other of our dishes (I wonder if they know how we make our sauces); nor do they mind who may have touched the pots and pans, as the Hindoos do. They get their prejudices against pork from the Mussulmans; and beef they promised their Hindoo protectors never to touch, when they were first received poor fugitives, on being expelled as Guebres (fire-worshippers) from Persia. There is something peculiar both in the size and the expression of the long Parsee eye. They are hardly a handsome race, although their features are regular, their complexion not dark (a kind of tawny), and their figures good. They never carry arms—another part of their compact—so they have to addict themselves entirely to commerce.

13th.—Cary and I drove out to Dum-Dum this morning—the artillery station, about seven miles from Calcutta, where she had a visit to pay to a particular friend, the wife of one of the officers. It being the first long excursion I had made, I had employment enough for my eyes during the hour we were travelling. The suburbs of this city of palaces are very miserable. The cement with which the walls of the better description of houses had once been covered seems all to have been washed away, showing shabby brickwork full of cracks, all so dirty and desolate, I could not tell whether it

were possible such dwellings could be inhabited, for the roof was in most cases covered with vegetation. These ruinous edifices are interspersed with the huts of the low-caste natives: some of them are made of mud; some are mere frames of bamboo, with coarse matting for the walls, neatly woven, and more durable than one would suppose, except in the season of the hurricanes, when they all fall about like the houses children make of cards which we blow down in our plays with them. These mats are made from the fibres of the cocoa-nut, and are all fastened to frames attached to the bamboo poles supporting the roof; thus forming the slender sides of the cabin. One of these frames is left unfastened, and is raised or lifted up at the lower end upon two sticks made to perform the part of door-posts to this rude porch, about which climbing-plants are frequently clustered, giving a picturesque appearance to what is only a very miserable shed. The substantial part of this frail shelter is the roof, and that, indeed, is all that the inhabitants feel it necessary to construct strongly, as their comfort mainly depends on this protection from the sun and the rain. I believe there is little furniture within beyond a mat or two for sleeping on, a brass pot which they use for bathing, cooking, and drinking, and which it is a religious duty to keep scrupulously clean, and the everlasting smoking pipe and cup never out of a native's hand and mouth, unless he is sleeping or eating. The merest urchins are to be seen puffing away before the doors. Other strange and disgusting sights are to be seen, making one wish to shut the eyes, and look no more. There is a better sort of dwelling built of brick and mud, and roofed with a little beetle-looking red tile, made very round; yet this house is hardly good enough for human beings to live in—more like what we should expect were cattle-sheds. Indeed the contrast between the palaces of the rich and the hovels of the poor is very painful—humiliating to the right-thinking everywhere, but positively offensive here—owing to the sudden transition from the garden villas of Chowringhee, and the noble squares of the European part of Calcutta, to the squalid quarters of the natives. Where their middle ranks reside we do not see; in fact there really are none left in the country hereabouts. All are Calcutta merchants. They live there in houses like ours, forming at the same time their dwellings, their offices, and their warehouses; and these residences are as large as palaces; for it is the custom for the head of the house to support all the rest of the family: brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, their wives, husbands, and children, all crowd under one roof, and live upon the resources of one man. The young people are married as early as possible, and the men are generally brought up to assist in the business. These great merchants mostly possess country-houses, which they call their garden-houses, within two or three miles of the city. They sometimes let these to Europeans; sometimes themselves pay short visits to them on Saturdays and Sundays, when our cessation from labour gives all connected with us a holiday likewise. Here they give their entertainments.

I am told that in travelling over the more interesting portions of Hindoostan, the same comfortless appearance prevails as I remarked to-day. No man ever thinks of repairing a house that another man has built. Even when the son succeeds the father, the first thing he does is to build a new house for himself, to make a name, they say. Decorum prevents his pulling the other one down; so it remains in melancholy desertion, till the climate completes the destruction neglect has begun—a work effected in a surprisingly short space of time. This may account for the quantity of ruins everywhere to be met with throughout India. Very near the unsightly suburbs is the English burying-ground, so filled with immense monuments, not in the best taste, as to present a strange jumbled appearance. It is situated far too close to the living, a matter formerly considered of no moment. Next we passed two fine public buildings, the colleges for the education of the Mohammedans

and the Hindoos. They are kept in high order, and have each a fine tank, neatly railed round, in the middle of their respective compounds. The road was crowded, literally crowded in the fresh early morning, with the country people going into town to their daily labour, or carrying in their market wares. Some had baskets of fruit, not very tempting looking, on their heads; others jars of water, gracefully slung over their shoulders: a long, yielding bamboo lies upon the neck, from each end of which a jar is suspended by cocoa-nut thongs. Under this light burthen these little people trot easily on, for the pots are small; indeed all they do puts me in mind of child's play; yet the work, as far as it goes, is well done; and labour is so cheap, that it answers better to employ a hundred of these water-carriers to fetch their two gallons, and then run back for two more, than to keep one man and one horse and one cart, as is done in like emergencies in England. In Calcutta there is a peculiar kind of water-carrier called a *heestie*, one or two, or more, of whom are attached to each household. The vessel he uses is a very primitive one—a goat-skin sewed up into a sack or bag, but retaining its original shape: this is hung at his back, and clings well round his waist by the help of the four legs; the aperture is near one of the feet, and the bearer, walking into the tank or river nearest his beat, fills his skin leisurely. It must then be heavy enough, for his gait under the full bag is much more leisurely than when he is strutting off with it empty. In this way all the water for the baths, the stables, and every purpose except for drinking, is conveyed to all the houses, at a cost of only four or five rupees a month. The water for the table use is all caught during the rains, pure as it falls from the clouds; and it is kept sweet during the eight dry months by a process the old men well understand, in large jars made of a light, red-coloured earthenware, in common use here. These jars are all of one shape—whatever their size may be—the natural shape of an India-rubber bottle. Those that contain the store of water, look large enough for each to have held one of the Forty Thieves, could he by any ingenuity have been squeezed in at the neck. One of these large reservoirs supplies our consumption for a month. The upper classes, therefore, are well enough accommodated with this first necessary of life; the poor are but badly off in this respect; few of them have the means to treasure up the rain; and what water they get from the river is poison, dead bodies and every sort of filth being thrown in there. Many of the diseases so prevalent among the lower orders are traced to their use of it; and the tanks are all as bad. No one seems to know of filtering. Gentlemen's servants and others make a good deal of money by selling the prepared water, but at such a price, that few of the class most requiring it can afford to buy it. What a noble charity it would be to provide the means of bringing wholesome water within the reach of this numerous population!

Jan. 17th.—I have been laid up these few days with a cold. People do catch cold in India; nor is it any wonder, considering the draughts we live in—every door and window open all over the house. The thermometer on the landing now stands at 60 degrees. During this forced retirement of mine from the gay doings of the house, I have been writing letters home, and clerking for Arthur, who is employed in another case, all the friends of the firm standing by him. Having made the beginning, it will be his own fault should he stop. The poor man who went to the Sandheads for change of air is ordered home. Shocking! that my first thought was of the place he vacates—the step up for us. We grow very—not selfish, I hope—but self-anxious in this battle of life, particularly when the struggle is in these climates. I took quite a tidy fit yesterday, and with ayah's assistance made grand reforms in our apartment. These occasional sweeps are perfectly necessary; otherwise the heat, the damp, and the insects would do mischief incalculable.

20th.—Went with Helen, and Mr Black, and their

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dear Little Johnny, to Pittar's and to Hamilton's, the two best jewellers here, to see the different cups to be run for at the approaching races, all manufactured in Calcutta, and creditable to the workmen. These shops are full of pretty things, quite in the style of silversmiths' shops at home; so that they are tempting lounging-places for the young men at this season; dangerous ones, I should fancy. We tried another drive this evening for a change. We took a turn on the circular road, but found it so dusty, we decided not to visit it again till the rains, six months hence; and content ourselves, as usual, with the Course, which is always kept well watered. Several balls are going forward, to none of which we quiet couple have been tempted. We talk them all over—extract the spirit from them—at the Course in the cool of the evening air; carriages often drawing up together for the purpose of conversation, when equestrians are sure to gather round so promising a centre.

24th.—The races. Set out so early that we had to dress by candlelight; for we use candles in our own room, with glass shades to them, on account of the draughts, the heavy smell of that cocoa-nut-oil is to me so very disagreeable. The horses must run while the air is cool, so we had no time to lose in order to be sure of good places. It is a pretty little Course, and from the stand we could see all round it. An inclosed space near the stand belonged, we were told, to certain privileged persons; but Cary and her chobdar drove boldly up to the barrier, when it was opened at once—the first time I have ever known that silver stick of any real use. We were soon surrounded by acquaintance; and as we had the horses taken out of the carriage, we mounted up to the box, from whence we had a perfect view of all that was going forward. There was a full attendance of spectators, and what all the lovers of the sport called a most interesting race—a match, and gentlemen riders; bets high; the natives just as busy as ourselves—as much excited. Indeed the gambling part was quite in their own way, quite according to their genius; and high and low participated in the pleasure of the uncertainty; for a dense mob of dark skins was gathered round the Course, all intent on the proceedings, yet most orderly and well behaved. I don't know whether Broad Street, Ludgate Hill, &c. would quite approve of this extension of the transactions of mercantile firms. The principal performers on the race-ground to-day were all members of this responsible profession. The owners of the crack horses, the two riders of the match, were all merchants. Of those of them that were married, the young English wives were fully as much absorbed in the event as their husbands. I could not help looking with sorrow at Helen when Mr Black came in winner. The excuse for all this is, that the languor induced by the climate can only be overcome by some excitement sufficiently powerful to stimulate the mind to re-nerve the body. Surely they forget the unfailing reaction.

26th.—A forenoon very pleasantly spent. The Mint-master, an old school friend of Arthur's, called at breakfast-time to carry us to see the Mint, a handsome building, situated near the river, in the fine European part of the town of Calcutta. It took us two good hours to follow the whole process of melting, coining, stamping, in all the different stages. The machinery is worked by a most beautiful steam-engine, the natives employed doing their duty well, no hard work being required of them, and their genius particularly adapting them for routine labour. It was at first difficult to get them to move quickly enough to keep pace with the rapidity of the mechanism. A little steadiness, the dismissal of idlers, the good pay, and one or two accidents from the want of the necessary activity, have overcome this constitutional indolence. It was quite a cheerful sight to see so many slow Hindoos so wakened up. They have been known formerly to fall actually asleep with all these wheels revolving round them. The breaking of a roller, put out of order by this neglect, awakened one

culprit, who was not permitted to run the risk of a doze in such a situation again; and now all are in too good order for a like accident to occur. I can quite believe that half of these dead-alive people would sleep at their posts, unless kept constantly stirred up. Edward is building a pigeon-house in his compound; and the lazy way in which three or four slender-armed little carpenters, seated upon the ground, have for several days been at work upon it, puts me in mind of children playing at trades. One good English workman, with a boy to hand him the nails, would have knocked up such a box in a day. At this visit to the Mint, one of the chobdars had insisted on attending us; and as a way of developing some of his intelligence, we obtained permission for him to accompany us over the works. He appeared to be properly impressed with all the wonders, and, as I fancied, interested in no common degree in the magical machinery. But on inquiring afterwards from ayah, to whom he had given a truly marvellous account of what he had witnessed, I found it was the actual sight of so much money that had excited him. He had noticed nothing else. He remembered only those showers of shining coin produced by the fire and the Mint-master.

#### 'THE ROMAN.'

AMONG the events that are noticeable, and befitting to be noted, we are inclined to reckon the advent of a poet. That peculiarity of intellect which reveals to us new and unexpected manifestations of the beautiful, has always been a quality of attractive interest among men; and notwithstanding the somewhat too exclusively mechanical tendencies of the present generation, we think it a mistake to suppose, as some do, that poetry is ever likely to fall in obtaining a just and becoming appreciation. There are always refined and cultivated minds capable of estimating and enjoying its delights, and there are therefore no sufficient grounds for concluding that any poetical work of merit will fall into neglect for want of proper readers. *Superiority* of any kind is, sooner or later, pretty sure of acknowledgment. In the meantime, it does not appear to us that the age has been particularly guilty of overlooking anything under the name of poetry which was really and absolutely worthy of its regard. A clever mediocrity, perhaps, may have often achieved a more extensive popularity than has been acquired by minds of the highest order; but it must be understood that this will always be the case, inasmuch as mediocrity, by the nature of it, appeals to a larger range of comparative intelligence than is accessible to intellects of greater compass and profundity; whose speculations, to be adequately interpreted, require an insight and cultivation more closely approximate to their own. The 'fit audience' which Milton desired will necessarily be 'few' whenever the argument is high; but that any genuine poet will ever fail to obtain a cordial recognition, at whatsoever time or period he may appear, we believe there is no sufficient cause for apprehending.

It is with this impression that we have undertaken to draw the attention of our readers to 'The Roman,' a new dramatic poem by a youthful author, who publishes under the assumed name of 'Sydney Yendys.' His work is one of quite unquestionable merit; full of lusty and exalted thoughts, strongly and often beautifully expressed; decorated with graceful imagery of a vigorous originality; animated with strains and strokes of passion of high interest and emphasis; and all wrought in and to some extent held harmoniously together by a marked and unifying purpose or design—the chosen argument or action of the drama. It is, however, necessary to be stated, that the poem likewise displays a continual tendency to diffuseness, an undue proneness to the rhetorical and declamatory, a general disposition

\* 'The Roman': a Dramatic Poem. By Sydney Yendys. Bentley.





dences of the greatness of his powers—powers too considerable to be wielded easily, and therefore now and then making a false stroke, though this defect is obviously curable by a wise and patient discipline. The passages we have selected are of various merit, but we think they all indicate the possession of a vigorous capacity of thought. Of the lighter and more fanciful portions of the poem we will next present one or two examples. The first is part of the soliloquy of a woman, 'sitting on a bank beneath trees,' on a moonlight evening:—

'I will but live in twilight,  
I will seek out some lone Egerian grove,  
Where sacred and o'er-greeting branches shed  
Perpetual eve, and all the cheated hours  
Sing vespers. And beside a sullen stream,  
Ice-cold at noon, my shadowy self shall sit,  
Crowned with dull wreaths of middle-tinted flowers;  
With sympathetic roses, waltz with weeping  
For April sorrows; frightened harschells, pale  
With thunder; last, half-scented honeysuckle,  
That, like an ill-starred child, hides its brown head,  
Through the long summer banquet, but steals late  
To wander through the fragments of the feast,  
And glad us with remembered words that fell  
From guests of beauty; sun-burnt lilies, gray  
Wind-whispering lilies, and whatever leaves  
And changing blossoms Flora, half-asleep,  
Makes paler than the sun and warmer than the moon!'

Take also the following picturesque apostrophe to a child:—

'Thou little child,  
Thy mother's joy, thy father's hope—thou bright  
Pure dwelling where two fond hearts keep their gladness—  
Thou little potentate of love, who comest  
With solemn sweet dominion to the old,  
Who see thee in thy merry fancies charged  
With the grave embassage of that dear past,  
When they were young like thee—thou vindication  
Of God—thou living witness against all men  
Who have been babes—thou everlasting promise  
Which no man keeps—thou portrait of our nature,  
Which in despair and pride we scorn and worship—  
Thou household god, whom no iconoclast  
Hath broken.'

These passages have not the bold simplicity of the former class of extracts, but we submit they have a true poetic beauty. The next quotation is in a different strain to either; and though perhaps not quite intelligible to every one, will be recognised by many as a just and beautiful reflection of an interesting phase of mental history:—

'It must be  
That noble man who deems his nature born  
As vast as truth, must sweat, and toil, and suffer,  
And overcome—enduring. When the heart  
Adds a new planet to its heaven, great portents  
Clash the celestial influence; strange signs  
Of coming dread, mysterious agencies,  
And omens inconceivable convulse  
The expectant system, while the stranger sails  
Still out of sight in space. Dim echoes  
Not of the truth, but witnessing the truth—  
Like the resounding thunder of the rock  
Which the sea passes—rushing thoughts like heralds,  
Voices which seem to clear the way for greatness,  
Cry advent in the soul, like the far shoutings  
That say a monarch comes. These must go by,  
And then the man who can outwatch this vigil  
Sees the apocalypse.'

Our concluding specimen will be what we consider an exquisite description of Roman ruins:—

'All through the lorn  
Vacuity winds came and went, but stirred  
Only the flowers of yesterday. Upstood  
The hoar unconscious walls, bisen and bare,  
Like an old man deaf, blind, and gray, in whom  
The years of old stand in the sun, and murmur  
Of childhood and the dead. From parapets  
Where the sky rests, from broken niches—each  
More than Olympus—for gods dwell in them—  
Below from senatorial haunts and seats  
Imperial, where the ever-passing fables  
Wore out the stone, strange hermit birds croaked forth  
Borrowed sounds, like watchers on the height  
Crying the hours of ruin. When the clouds

Dressed every myrtle on the walls in mourning,  
With calm prerogative the eternal pile  
Impassive shone with the unearthly light  
Of immortality. When conquering suns  
Triumphed in jubilant earth, it stood out dark  
With thoughts of ages: like some mighty captive  
Upon his deathbed in a Christian land,  
And lying, through the chant of psalm and creed,  
Unshriven and stern, with peace upon his brow,  
And on his lips strange gods.'

Rank weeds and grasses  
Careless and nodding, grew, and asked no leave,  
Where Romans trembled. Where the wreck was saddest  
Sweet pensive herbs, that had been gay elsewhere,  
With conscious men of place rose tall and still,  
And bent with duty. Like some village children  
Who found a dead king on a battle field,  
And with decorous care and reverent pity  
Composed the lordly ruin, and sat down  
Grave without tears. At length the giant lay,  
And everywhere he was begirt with years,  
And everywhere the torn and mouldering Past  
Hung with the ivy. For Time, smit with honour  
Of what he slew, cast his own mantle on him,  
That none should mock the dead.'

We have nowise exhausted the riches of this poem, but we think our quotations are sufficient to prove the author's title to the honoured name of poet. Those who are willing to study poetry, will find an ample satisfaction in this volume. There is in it a display of thought and a magnificence of imagination quite beyond the compass and attainments of the ordinary poetical writers of the day. The lyrical portions of the poem perhaps are not equal to the rest: there is a tone in them that sounds like imitation, which will probably be obvious to the readers of Macaulay's 'Lays' and the ballads of Alfred Tennyson. The author's achievements of this kind seem to us to be far below the merit of his models. Still we do not doubt that with larger practice in this description of poetry, he may attain a very eminent success. We have no advices to give the author. With the gifts which he possesses, there can be little doubt that he will learn ultimately whatsoever may be needful for their appropriate development. Listening intently to the admonitions of the inner mind, to the still and secret voices which speak through him in his hours of inspiration, it may be his lofty privilege to draw up a deeper and still deeper wisdom with every successive visit to the wells of beauty.

### MY FIRST GOVERNNESS.

WHEN my two sisters had reached the ages of twelve and thirteen, and my brother was counting the days till he arrived at seven years of age, and I was neither expected nor wished for, it pleased Providence that I should be born. While a very little child, I fared like all other very little children among not ill-disposed people; but the older I became, the less did my popularity increase. I was plain and shy, and gave great trouble to my sisters, who were appointed to teach me reading, writing, sewing, and music; and as they neither of them were endowed with the faculty of imparting easily or pleasantly the little knowledge they possessed themselves, the lesson hours were detested both by the teachers and the taught, and little progress was made. The blame of this was, they said, all mine—'Cecilia was so stupid, and so idle;' and they thought it very witty to contract my name to Cilly (Silly). My mother was engaged with her house and her company—for we kept a good deal—and my father with his field-sports or his farming; and after I outgrew the nursery-maid's care, mamma's personal attendant thought she did quite enough for me when she made up gingham frocks after the same pattern as those her mistress had worn at the same age, or made down some white dress which my sisters had laid aside, for me to appear in on company days—always disagreeable days to me, who, running wild amongst the servants and labourers, was infinitely happier in their society than in that of 'the company' in the drawing-room, where I had to sit as still as a statue, to hear people remark, after looking at me, 'How dif-

ferent Cecilia is from all the rest! she is not even like Charlie: she does not appear to belong to the family.' I am sure I did not feel to belong to the family, except, indeed, as to the right the whole of them apparently had to say unpleasant things: 'Don't stoop; do turn out your feet; pray look less solemn; let this alone; don't touch that,' &c. or some such agreeable and polite observation. I was certainly very plain: I had a fat face, which looked unnecessarily large from my uncurled hair being cut short on my forehead, and a white pasty complexion, from indulging in green fruits and all the trash I could get from servants at irregular hours. Except my eyes, none of my features were particularly good; my teeth were uneven; and I held myself awkwardly. My ill-made clothes made my figure, which had nothing elegant to recommend it, look worse than it might otherwise have done, whilst my shy manner communicated to my *tout-ensemble* an air of constraint which was truly despicable.

From hearing every day that I was idle, stupid, obstinate, untidy, plain, and awkward, I learned to believe that I was so naturally and inevitably, and need therefore give myself no trouble to become what I could never attain. I was to consider nothing my own that any one else could use: old clothes, old toys, old books, were given to me, as they would do quite as well for Silly as new ones. No facilities for tidiness were offered to me; but yet I was expected to be tidy. I was never praised, and often blamed; so I very naturally supposed that I never deserved the first, and frequently merited the second. I took no pride or pleasure in anything; and all I aimed at was to scuffle through hated lessons I was forced to learn, and then run to play with the gardener's children, or wander to a thick wood near the house, and far from the 'human face divine,' where, surrounded by birds and insects whose voices soothed instead of irritating me, and flowers, that though beautiful and elegant themselves, never reproached me for my want of these qualities. I could for the time forget my troubles, singing over the songs I had caught up in the hayfield, and building castles in the air for my future life: wherein I chose to fancy my sisters married and absent, and my parents become old and blind. These were to be my days of happiness and peace; in which the former being gone from the house, the latter unable to see how ugly and awkward I was, might perhaps forget all about it, and love me as they did Fanny and Madge.

When the weather was bad, I was put into a large dull apartment next the dining-room, to be out of the way, where a carpet that was never swept or lifted, an ink-stained table, two guns and a hunting-whip, and all the broken chairs in the house, composed the furniture. The window was a very large one, but I could not see out of it, for two high green blinds, that reached halfway up, were always shut, and were too stiff for me to open. Often when turned back with my weary lessons, I was desired to go and study it in 'the parlour:' when naughty, here I was sent as a punishment; and as the very sight of the room gave me a cold shudder, I never visited it of my own free will.

'Now remember, Cecilia,' said my mother to me one day, 'your godmother is coming; pray answer her smilingly when she speaks to you, and try to be very good, and have your catechism perfect, for she will be sure to make you say it.'

My godmother, Mrs St Stevens, was a well-looking, well-dressed, well-mannered, handsome woman. She looked a little surprised when I was presented to her, but spoke kindly, and asked me several questions, which were obligingly answered for me.

'What are you reading, my dear?'

'Poor Silly,' laughed Frances, 'has not made much progress in reading or writing: she has no capacity for learning I fear.'

'Do you like work, Cecilia—sewing?'

'Oh no,' answered Margaret in her turn; 'she hates and detests work of all kinds, and sews abominably.'

'Have you begun music?'

'Yes; to my sorrow she has,' replied Frances; 'for I have to teach her. But 'tis no use going on, I think, for she never will play—has no ear!'

Next day Mrs St Stevens asked me by the name of Celia to take a walk in the garden with her alone, where she recommended the questions she had asked the evening before.

'Do you like music?'

'Yes, very much when other people play; but I don't like learning it, it is so difficult.'

'But don't you like reading pretty stories?'

'I like to hear them when Jane or Warden tell them; but I can't read them for myself—I wish I could.'

'Then why don't you try to learn, my love?'

'Because I am so stupid: I can learn nothing.'

'Is it not rather that you are idle, Celia?'

'I like to be called Celia, but my sisters always call me Silly, and papa and mamma Cissy.'

'My name is the same as yours, and I was always called Celia.'

'Then I like to be Celia too; for I like you, though you are a lady.'

My godmother looked pleased, and soon after I saw her talking very earnestly to my father and mother, and I overheard mamma say, 'Well, I am sure I have no objection; but I fear, poor child, there is nothing to be made of her.'

About a month after this I was, as usual, crying about my lessons. 'Ah,' said Fanny, 'if you cry with us, what will you do when the governess comes? She won't let you off so soon as we do, or so easily either; and from that day, whatever I did wrong, the coming governess and her terrors were used as a threat, till I trembled and grew sick at the thoughts of what awaited me.

Just before this terrible governess was expected, I—most providentially as I thought it—caught a violent cold, and had the comfort of being confined to bed when she arrived. I complained as much and as long as I could, in order to be kept back longer; but at last these pretences could serve me no longer, and one morning I was desired to go into the dining-room, where they were at breakfast, to be introduced to my future instructress. Paler and uglier than ever from my recent illness, more awkward from my present terror, I advanced, looking down, towards a lady whose hand was held out to me, and who said something I was much too agitated to hear. While one hoped I would no longer 'be idle;' another kind relative hoped I would be made 'more tidy;' a third, that I would not be 'troublesome.' But on papa's saying, 'Give me a kiss, Ciss; I'm sure you'll try and be good,' I looked up; and Miss Hereford rising, said kindly, but resolutely, 'Come to me in the school-room in half an hour, Celia, with all your books.'

When she was gone, my sisters brought my blotted copy-book, my dogs'-eared spelling-book, my torn, crumpled music-book, and a towel I had been so long in hemming, it was quite black.

'There,' exclaimed Margaret with a sneer, 'I wonder what Miss Hereford will say when she sees these specimens of your progress!'

I no doubt would have felt very much ashamed had my terror of the governess and my coming literary miseries not extinguished every other sensation, and mechanically taking what was mockingly handed to me, I proceeded towards the hated parlour, now more detestable than ever, for it was turned into a school-room. Long I stood at the door without courage to open it, when my spelling-book falling and making a noise, Miss Hereford called out, 'Come in!' One moment more, and I stood in the school-room. Oh how unlike the old parlour! A bright fire burnt in the grate, a gay paper covered the walls, a new carpet the floor; the green blinds were gone, and I looked over a plot of spring-flowers into the garden. Miss Hereford sat before a table covered with books and packages, looking quite good-humoured.

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spend many a happy day in. Come here, my dear, and see the pretty presents your kind godmother has sent, and your papa has given you.' There was a small new pianoforte; two bookcases, before the smallest of which stood a table with a drawer, on which was a workbox. 'These are yours.' I was speechless; so Miss Hereford went on. 'I trust you will keep everything in order: all your books must be put in that bookcase; your scissors, thimble, and needles, in that workbox; in this basket your work; in the drawer of the table your copy-book and pen: your work must never again look black like *this*. Read to me while I finish hemming it, that we may get rid of the sight of anything so dirty.'

I began to stammer through a story, stopping to spell every third word, while Miss Hereford sewed on, without making a remark, and then turning over the leaves of my copy-book, deliberately put it in the fire.

'I have no doubt that we shall find some poor child who will be very thankful for your old books; and as we are to be very tidy,' added she smiling, 'we shall use this new one instead.' Most unpleasant were the reflections connected with my former books, and I gladly looked my approbation.

'Now, my dear,' said my governess, handing me the towel, 'here is a very little bit to do: I have laid it down for you: do it as nicely as you can, while I read aloud a pretty tale out of one of your own new books.'

Spoken to with mildness and civility, and interested in the story, which was told in language suited to my comprehension, and read distinctly, I worked on without disliking it, and before the tale was quite finished, had completed my task. Miss Hereford observed that it was more neatly sewed than any I had before done, and then asked me to let her hear me play, in a tone which, although mild and kind, made me feel I must do so at once without excuse. My performance was even worse than usual: it was an easy air I had been hammering over for six weeks, and could not play yet without innumerable mistakes. Miss Hereford sat down, and went through it several times distinctly, and with the proper expression; and then bade me try it once more. I did so, and to my own astonishment played it nearly quite correctly.

'That will do, Celia; I see you have a good ear, and will, if you take pains, play very well; but until you are thoroughly grounded, you shall attempt no more airs; and the exercises I shall give you are so easy, and the difficulties come on so gradually, that when you are far enough advanced for pieces of music, you will learn them without disgust, having before mastered the mechanical parts. Now come and look at these books; to-morrow I shall teach you how to paper them; and we shall begin this new copy-book after we have taken a walk.'

I was enchanted to be told that there was a possibility of my playing well; that, after all, I *had* an ear; that the time would come that learning would be easy; and seemed in a dream when I reflected that I had things—new things! good things!—belonging to me—*my own*! and places to keep them in. All this was strange, and as delightful as strange. I already loved Miss Hereford, although, three hours before, I had trembled at her name. I was now dismissed, to put on my walking things, which I tried to do as tidily as I could, and for the first time in my life felt ashamed of the knotted ribbons in my shoes, and the tumbled bows of my bonnet; but Randall was out of the way, and I could only go down in them as they were. Miss Hereford said nothing, but quietly took the ribbons off my bonnet, and arranged them properly, pinning in underneath a little net-frilled cap of her own. She put new strings in my shoes, a clean collar round my neck, and then presenting a hand-glass, asked me if I thought I looked neater. I was pleased at the change, thanked her heartily, and ten minutes afterwards was walking by her side, chattering cheerfully, and feeling as well as looking a dif-

ferent being. Oh how I now loved the parlour!—how I longed for my happy school hours! I did not 'come on,' as it is called, very fast at first; for I had not the *habit* of learning, nor indeed could I give my undivided attention to anything, except the happy and unlooked-for change in my present life. Miss Hereford began at the very beginning again, making me spell words of three letters, and write single strokes. She read to me, while I worked, such pretty instructive stories, that I longed for the sewing hour to commence. She always, and until I read without hesitation, read to me the lessons and psalms for the day, requiring only that I should tell her something I had gathered from what I had listened to; so that nothing I was taught was distasteful to me, and I began at last, when lessons were over, to read tales for myself, and very soon was able to do so easily. I shall never forget the delight with which I sat one rainy day reading Miss Edgeworth's 'Rosamond,' and the pride with which I reflected that I could do so for myself. I felt quiet, calm, and really happy.

'Oh la! la!' cried the mocking voice of Frances, 'Silly reading by herself! Well, Miss Hereford *must* be a witch to have got you to do that! How often does she whip you?'

'My name is Celia, not Silly. Miss Hereford never whips or scolds; but she knows *how* to teach, and you do not, that's all.'

'You little impertinent monkey, I have a great mind to box your ears. I can teach any one but such a stupid thing as you well enough,' replied Frances, opening my workbox, and taking out a reel of cotton.

'That's my cotton; I shan't let you have any.'

'Yours, indeed! What business has such a chit as you to have anything to call yours? little untidy thing as you are!'

'I am not untidy, now that I have things of my own; and I won't lend them to you—you are so unkind. So put that down, and go away.'

Her answer was a slap, mine a loud cry, and in came Miss Hereford from her own room with 'what is the matter?'

'Miss Silly is obstinate and impertinent, as usual—nothing more,' cried Frances angrily.

'Frances takes my things without asking me, and slaps me; and I hate her,' sobbed I.

'Gently, Celia. Remember that Frances is your elder sister; and you must control your passion, and not speak rudely.'

But I was too angry to hear reason, and without attending to Miss Hereford, I continued violently, 'She *shan't* have my cotton.'

'Go into my room, Celia, and remain there until I call you.'

What passed in the schoolroom I know not; but when Miss Hereford came, and desired me to beg pardon of my sister, I flatly refused, saying, 'It was all her fault. I was reading quite happily, and she mocked me, and slapped me, and took my thread, and I won't ask her pardon: she should rather ask mine.'

'Admitting that your sister was wrong, *that* does not make you right. I have no authority over her; but you are my pupil; you have behaved ill; and I must have you to obey me. Go and beg your sister's pardon for your share of the offence, and afterwards I shall talk the matter over with you.'

I went sullenly, was received as sullenly, and so the matter ended. But the day passed drearily, Miss Hereford was displeased, talked a great deal to me; but still I felt sore against Frances, and felt truly rejoiced to think that she and all the others were going away the week following for three months, during which time the house (except our rooms) was all to be painted and papered, and my little bed and chest of drawers brought to Miss Hereford's bedroom, which I was to occupy during that period. As long as I live, these happy three months will be the green spot in my 'memory's waste.' The peace, the calm, the gradual development

of my reasoning faculties, the rapture of new ideas breaking into my hitherto vacant mind—the birth of hope in my heart, from the certainty that I could learn, could understand, could expect to be like other people one day—was what no pen can convey. I began not only to feel, but to look a different being.

Miss Hereford, to whom my father gave *carte-blanche*, and my godmother the *de quoi*, set about remodelling my dress: my twelve frocks were made into eight; an additional breadth put in each skirt, which was lengthened, and the bodies and sleeves altered to the fashion; my old battered bonnet was turned, and trimmed with blue; and a new one, bought for great occasions, ornamented with white ribbons; my old stays and shabby shoes were put aside, and new well-fitting ones replaced them. My hair was allowed to grow, and then properly divided, cut, and curled round my face, which, so shaded, no longer looked so large. A lesson of dancing was added to my other occupations, my meals were taken regularly, and I was never suffered to eat anything, wholesome or unwholesome, between them: this improved my health, and quite cleared my complexion. Miss Hereford was my sole companion; for although desired to speak to the servants with kindness, I was never permitted to converse with them or the gardener's children, who forgave me easily when my old books, clothes, and playthings were carried to them as gifts from me; and, in short, I seemed to bear a new existence. Feeling more confident of my capacity, I lost much of the sheepishness and awkwardness of manner and look which made me so peculiarly ungraceful; and when my parents returned, they were perfectly amazed at my amended looks and carriage, and the improvement in my temper. My father was delighted when I played a duet of Mozart's with Miss Hereford—which I had studied to please him—without a blunder, and with the proper expression; and declared that, after all, he shouldn't wonder if Silly turned out the cleverest of the family—'ay, and the handsomest too;' at which mamma laughed, as if pleased; and Fanny and Margaret laughed, as if very much the contrary; but they said nothing to wound me, and we went on rather smoother afterwards.

Miss Hereford remained three years, when she left me to fulfil a matrimonial engagement of long standing, which she had put off a year longer on my account. A French lady succeeded her; and two years afterwards I went to school, from whence I have just returned, and have been received by Frances and Margaret as a *compagnon*—both being now as anxious to forget the difference of our ages as they formerly were to make me remember how very much younger I was than themselves.

#### VENTILATION—THE CHOLERA.

FROM the recently-published Report of the General Board of Health on the subject of cholera, it appears that that disease originates and maintains its virulence chiefly from a want of ventilation. This is a very important fact. Other circumstances, such as intemperance, cold, deficient diet, and so on, materially contribute to predispose persons to be affected; but it seems that the substantial cause of cholera in the first instance is the breathing of impure air. In an article in the *Times*, referring to the terrible evils which spring from defective ventilation, the following observations occur:—'It is known, for example, when the atmosphere is in a choleraic condition, that the overcrowding of human beings under the same roof, and in the same apartment, is almost invariably followed by an outbreak of the disease. A very remarkable instance of this kind occurred at Taunton in the beginning of June 1849. The terrible rapidity with which the disease developed itself in the workhouse of that town at the period named must still be fresh in the recollection of the public. The girls' schoolroom was a slated shed, 50 feet long, 9 feet 10 inches broad, and 7 feet 9 inches in height to the top of the walls; the roof was sloping. Into this shed were thrust sixty-seven children. The epidemic influence was abroad. Here was a hotbed prepared for its development. The workhouse was attacked, and in a week sixty

of the inmates were no more. It was in the girls' school that the mortality prevailed—why should not the boys' school have equally felt the scourge? Simply because the boys could not be kept from breaking the windows. To this circumstance, and to the better ventilation which was its result, the chaplain to the workhouse attributed their immunity from the disease. Take another instance—it is an Indian one. In India the conditions favourable to the development of the cholera are met with under circumstances of exaggerated intensity. In the town of Kurachee, where the houses are so built as to be inaccessible to currents of air, out of 15,000 inhabitants, 1500, or 1 in 10, died of cholera. In the bazaar of the same town, which is inhabited by the same class of persons, but which is laid out in large compounds, divided by wide streets, the mortality was only 1 in 30. The Report of the Board of Health abounds with such facts as these. The obvious inference is, that when the cholera is abroad, the overcrowding of human beings under the same roof is one of the most persuasive invitations which can be offered to the disease. We find the exact figures furnished us in the Report of the quantity of air necessary for the support of life. To live and to sleep in a space of less than from 400 to 500 cubic feet for each individual, is not, during the prevalence of an epidemic, compatible with safety to life, unless precautions be taken for the renewal of air by ventilation. An adult person should in twenty-four hours breathe thirty-six hogsheads of wholesome air. The blood circulates round the body once in a minute. There pass through the lungs daily twenty-four hogsheads of blood to be brought into contact with the quantity of air we have named.' It is almost needless to say that the discovery now made respecting the general origin of cholera, suggests to all householders the urgent necessity for securing the due and continuous admission of pure air into their dwellings, more particularly their sleeping apartments. The means for ventilation are fortunately of easy accomplishment.

#### FEEDING THE HUNGRY.

I have just seen a laughable sight. A huge wooden bowl, some two feet in diameter, and full of boiled rice, was placed in the middle of the street; a crowd of Arabs immediately squatted round, all plunging in their hands at once, and licking their fingers with monstrous delight. The mess vanished rapidly; every one who passed was invited to partake; and some good-natured fellows seized an old blind man, and threw him, grinning with delight, over the heads of those who surrounded the basin, in order that he might get a handful. Women were stopped, and as they could not eat at once, on account of their veils, had their hands filled. One soon contrived to swallow her portion; and I saw her go away wiping her finger against the wall. Children, while on the shoulders of others, came for their portion. All this was the work of about three minutes, when the crowd began to disperse. One man, however, probably a late comer, snatched up the bowl, under pretence of washing it from a water-skin on a camel's back hard by, and began to scrape it round and round, and lick his fingers with delight. Presently a couple of women joined him, and they squatted down round it, poured more water in, swilled the sides, and washed down the remaining grains of rice, which they scooped up and devoured. When these had done, yet another hungry one appeared, and seizing the bowl, rubbed it as if he wanted to melt the sides, poured in a little water, rubbed again, and succeeded in producing a pale fluid. Then he took up the enormous vessel in his two hands, and seemed to enjoy the draught extremely. I afterwards learned that this was a gift to the poor on the occasion either of a marriage, a circumcision, or a death.—*St John's Two Years' Residence in a Levantine Family.*

#### TAME FISH IN AMERICA.

In a pond on the old Boyden place (now Quenten's, N. J.) a school of pet fish is cultivated for the amusement of the family. They consist of the common catfish and a small brook species of about three inches in length, and they take food from the hand as readily as a dog, seeming to have little or no fear.

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